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# Officials Explain Latin Move, Say Criticism Is Uninformed

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Key U.S. officials look back today over four weeks of United States peacekeeping activity in the Dominican Republic and find nothing they would change in this government's actions.

When President Johnson ordered Marines into Santo Domingo on April 28, there were loud wails that the United States was violating the non-intervention principles of the inter-American system.

But now it is an inter-American intervention, with U.S. Marines and paratroopers along with the armed forces of several other American republics under command of Brazilian Lt. Gen. Hugo Penasco Alvin.

And officials here consider the formation of this inter-American force the most significant thing that has happened in Western Hemisphere affairs in the last 25 years.

## Held a Precedent

They regard it as a precedent for possible future "counter-intervention" forces — countering intervention of Communists — to hold any country of the hemisphere against subversives until stable, democratic governments can become effective.

There are hopes for early success in efforts to establish a government of national unity in the Dominican Republic to end the civil war there.

These hopes now rest primarily on Jose Antonio Mora, secretary-general of the Organization of American States, who is in Santo Domingo with OAS authority to try to help form a government that is not to the extreme left or right.

The United States will try to support Mora's recommendations. And if a stable government can be formed, the United States will be ready to help with a program of reconstruction.

In reviewing this government's decisions and actions

since that fateful Wednesday afternoon four weeks ago when the President ordered Marines into Santo Domingo to protect American lives, officials insisted that most of the criticism has been uninformed.

The critics have attacked the American actions on three main grounds: (1) That the OAS should have been consulted and there should have been no unilateral U.S. intervention; (2) there was no need for such a large force as the more than 20,000 Marines and paratroopers sent to the Dominican Republic; (3) the intervention was impulsive.

## Officials' Answers

Answering these criticisms one by one, officials said the critics apparently were not aware that this government had consulted members of the OAS on the gravity of the situation in the Dominican Republic for several days before the Marines were sent in.

They also pointed out that it should be apparent to any well-informed person that no Latin American diplomat could ever vote to send Marines into a Latin American country. So if the dispatch of the Marines had been put up to the OAS, it would have been debated for days during which hundreds of American civilians in Santo Domingo might have been killed, these officials point out.

As to the force being too large, they say the Army really wanted 30,000 instead of only 20,000 men to seal off the international neutral zone in Santo Domingo.

Answering those who say the President acted impulsively, officials said these critics must not realize that the Dominican revolution started on Saturday, April 24, and the President and his key military, diplomatic and intelligence advisers had been considering every possibility for four days.

This government had reports in advance of an imminent revolt in the Dominican Republic.

One top official said it was known that Communists in Santo Domingo had decreed that the government there had to go.

## Recalled To Washington

W. Tapley Bennett Jr., U.S. ambassador to the Dominican Republic, was recalled to Washington for consultations. Some think his return may have triggered the revolution ahead of schedule.

Bennett himself has been a target of some criticism. But he stands high with the President, who is thinking in terms of promoting Bennett and raising his pay rather than firing him as some critics have suggested.

Anyway, Bennett was here conferring with the President and other officials when the revolt broke out. By the second day of the revolution, on Sunday, April 25, the President ordered a part of the Atlantic Fleet to steam close into Santo Domingo to be ready for any emergency action. And Bennett was sent flying back to his post.

Through Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of the last week in April, key officials consulted with representatives of 14 Latin American countries, briefing them on the grave situation in the Dominican Republic and asking them to try to make recommendations. The OAS peace committee met Tuesday. On Wednesday, the OAS council met—on U.S. suggestion. But it adjourned without any action.

Between about 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. that Wednesday, April 28, the President received three cables from Bennett, reporting in effect that the Dominican government had asked for American intervention and had notified Bennett that it could not provide protection for American citizens.

Before the third cable came in, rebel forces were shooting up some Latin American embassies as well as the U.S. Embassy.

When Bennett's climactic

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